

Ottawa

La Promenade Building
Room 1050
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
Tel: (613) 992-6535
Fax: (613) 992-7764



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Constituency

40 Centennial Parkway North
Suite 2
Hamilton, Ontario
L8E 1H6
Tel: (905) 662-4763
Fax: (905) 662-2285

Wayne Marston

Member of Parliament for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek

March 12, 2013

The Honorable Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
2 Hoang Van Thu Hanoi, Vietnam

Mr. Prime Minister:

As the Official Opposition's Critic for Human Rights, I write to you today to express my considerable concern regarding reports that the Vietnamese government continues to systematically suppress freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly.

According to Amnesty International, in 2012 dozens of peaceful dissidents were imprisoned, with many sentenced to long prison terms in trials that failed to meet international standards.

More recently, the recent conviction and excessive sentencing of 14 peaceful Catholic activists only adds to my concerns. The convictions of these activists illustrate a deeply worrying trend, and suggest that your government's crackdown on dissent is likely to continue through 2013.

Here are the names of the human rights activists in question: Ho Duc Hoa, Dang Xuan Dieu, Paulus Le Son, Nguyen Van Duyet, Nguyen Van Oai, Ho Van Oanh, Nguyen Dinh Cuong, Nguyen Xuan Anh, Thai Van Dung, Tran Minh Nhat, Nong Hung Anh, Nguyen Dang Vinh, Nguyen Dang Minh Man and Dang Ngoc Minh.

I ask that you consider releasing these human rights defenders as soon as possible. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. As a signatory to this covenant, it is in your government's interests to respect and champion human rights and freedoms. With a rapidly increasing netizen population both inside and outside Vietnam, human rights violations no longer go unnoticed.

In other words, the world is watching.

I thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Marston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Wayne Marston, Member of Parliament (Hamilton East-Stoney Creek)
New Democratic Party of Canada Human Rights Critic